



Kilnamona National School Anti-bullying Policy

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Appendix 1: Kilnamona N.S. Code of Behaviour/ Anti Bullying Meeting Record

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Appendix 5: Practical tips for building a positive school culture and climate.

Introduction

1. In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the code of behaviour guidelines issued by the NEWB, the Board of Management of Kilnamona National School has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's overall code of behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* which were published in September 2013.

This Policy must be read in conjunction with the Schools Overall Code of Behaviour

2. The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of pupils and is therefore fully committed to the following **key principles of best practice** in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:

2.1 A positive school culture and climate which-

- a) is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
- b) encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and
- c) promotes respectful relationships across the school community.

Key elements of a positive school culture and climate are outlined in **Table A**. Some practical tips for building a school culture and climate are also set out in Appendix 5.

Table A: Key Elements of a positive school culture and climate

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The school acknowledges the right of each member of the school community to enjoy school in a secure environment.• The school acknowledges the uniqueness of each individual and his/her worth as a human being.• The school promotes positive habits of self-respect, self-discipline and responsibility among all its members.• The school prohibits vulgar, offensive, sectarian or other aggressive behaviour or language by any of its members. |
|---|

- The school has a clear commitment to promoting equity in general and gender equity in particular in all aspects of its functioning.
- The school has the capacity to change in response to pupils' needs.
- The school identifies aspects of curriculum through which positive and lasting influences can be exerted towards forming pupils' attitudes and values.
- The school takes particular care of "at risk" pupils and uses its monitoring systems to facilitate early intervention where necessary and it responds to the needs, fears or anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner.
- The school recognises the need to work in partnership with and keep parents informed on procedures to improve relationships on a school-wide basis.
- The school recognises the role of parents in equipping the pupil with a range of life-skills.
- The school recognises the role of other community agencies in preventing and dealing with bullying.
- The school promotes habits of mutual respect, courtesy and an awareness of the interdependence of people in groups and communities.
- The school promotes qualities of social responsibility, tolerance and understanding among all its members both in school and out of school.
- Staff members share a collegiate responsibility, under the direction of the Principal, to act in preventing bullying/aggressive behaviour by any member of the school community.

2.2 Effective leadership

- a) The BOM has overall responsibility to ensure that this policy is effective, sustainable and measured. The BOM must ensure that accountability is of the highest standard and frequently appraise the outcomes of the strategies and measures contained within the policy.
- b) The whole staff has a clear role to act in a leadership capacity within the school community, stimulating a whole school approach to preventing and tackling bullying – and modelling best practice.
- c) The Principal of Kilnamona N.S. as key leader strongly influences attitudes and sets standards in relation to dealing with bullying.

- d) Teachers must act as good role models and be fair, clear and consistent in their disciplinary measures.

2.3 A school-wide approach;

- a) A whole community approach to the problem of bullying is required and Kilnamona N.S. community comprises of management, teachers, non-teaching staff, pupils, parents/guardians.
- b) Beyond the school community, bullying behaviour may extend to outside of school. Where this negatively impacts on a school - parents and pupils have a responsibility to support the school in helping to address the issue. This applies particularly (but not exclusively) to cyber bullying.
- c) The assistance of Gardaí, TUSLA, Community Workers and other outside agencies may be required in some cases.

2.4 A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact;

- a) Kilnamona N.S. endeavours to put in place appropriate systems to ensure that ALL relevant members of the school community (parents, pupils, staff and the wider community) have a shared understanding of what constitutes bullying behaviour as defined in this policy (Section 2&3 of Anti Bullying Procedures for Primary & Post Primary Schools).

2.5 Implementation of education and prevention strategies, including awareness raising measures that

- a) build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and
- b) explicitly addresses the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and trans phobic bullying.
- c) Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils.

2.6 Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils

- a) Staff members have a distinct responsibility to ensure that supervision of pupils in class is effective and consistent.
- b) Supervision in playground areas must be managed and conducted effectively.

2.7 Supports for staff

- a) Regular discussion and review of policy and procedures is essential to support staff on a continuous basis.
- b) All staff must have a uniform interpretation of what is expected in relation to bullying, how to identify possible bullying behaviours, how to manage disclosures and how to deal effectively with incidents of bullying within the classroom context.
- c) Staff must be aware that supporting one another is a key aspect of prevention and new/inexperienced members of staff must be given every opportunity to discuss concerns and model best practice.
- d) CPD in relation to Anti Bullying Strategies will be supported and encouraged for all members of staff.

2.8 **Consistent recording** (Appendix 1,2 and 3), investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and

2.9 **On-going evaluation** of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy will be an integral part of our anti-bullying procedures.

3. Definition and types of Bullying

3.1 In accordance with the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* bullying is **defined** as follows:

Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted, by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.

3.2 The following types of bullying behaviour are included in this non exhaustive definition of bullying:

- a) deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,
- b) cyber-bullying

- c) identity - based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveller Community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.

Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging, do not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

However, in the context of this policy, placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour.

Negative behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

3.3 Some Indications (of/that may point to) Bullying

The following signs do not necessarily mean that a pupil is being bullied. If repeated or in combination, however, such signs should be investigated to establish what is affecting the pupil.

- Anxiety regarding any aspect of school life
- Falling behind or sudden disinterest in school work
- Pattern of physical illness
- Unexplained changes in mood or behaviour regarding school
- Visible signs of anxiety or distress (nightmares, bedwetting etc)
- Possessions missing
- Increased requests for money
- Unexplained bruising
- Reluctance to say what is troubling him/her

4. The relevant teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying in Kilnamona N.S. are as follows:

Principal

Deputy Principal

All class teachers.

All matters will be addressed by the Principal/Deputy Principal/relevant teachers in accordance with this policy. If the class teacher cannot resolve the situation using the interventions and sanctions then they progress to the level of deputy principal and principal for resolution.

Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it.

5. The education and prevention strategies, including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular homophobic and transphobic bullying, that will be used by the school are as follows:

5.1 School-wide approach

- a) A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community.
- b) The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- c) The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.
- d) Professional development with specific focus on the training of the relevant teachers
- e) School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parents/guardians and the wider school community
- f) Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra- curricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers. Supervision will also apply to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school.
- g) Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying code for the school-to be displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school.
- h) The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and all parents/guardians are given a copy as part of the Code of Behaviour of the school on enrolment.
- i) The implementation of regular (e.g. per year) whole school awareness measures e.g. a dedicated notice board in the school and classrooms on the promotion of friendship, and bullying prevention.
- j) Encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. In that way pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
- k) Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.:
 - Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
 - Hand note up with homework.

- Make a phone call to the school
 - Get a parent/guardian or friend to tell on your behalf.
- Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.
 - Place a note in “Anonymous Worry Box”
- l)** Identify clear protocols to encourage parents/guardians to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied. The protocol should be developed in consultation with parents.
- m)** The development of an Acceptable Use Policy in the school to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored.
- n)** The listing of supports currently being used in the school and the identification of other supports available to the school.

5.2 Implementation of curricula

- a)** The full implementation of the SPHE and the RSE and Stay Safe Programmes.
- b)** Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes.
- c)** Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes at primary level. These lessons, delivered by Community Gardaí, cover issues around personal safety and cyber-bullying
- d)** The school will specifically consider the additional needs of SEN pupils with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately.

5.3 Links to other policies

Hereunder is a list of school policies, practices and activities that are particularly relevant to bullying:

- a)** Code of Behaviour
- b)** Safeguarding Statement
- c)** Acceptable Use Policy
- d)** Health & Safety Policy
- e)** General Data Protection Regulations Policy

6 Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying

6.1 The primary aim in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame);

The school's procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are as follows:

6.2 Reporting bullying behaviour

- a) Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school.
- b) All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.
- c) Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher.

6.3. Investigating and dealing with incidents: Style of approach

- a) In investigating and dealing with bullying, the relevant teacher will exercise her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved.
- b) Parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible; Parents will be involved in the initial stages of the procedures once the relevant teacher has established the facts.
- c) All involved (including each set of pupils and parents/guardians) should be made aware of the investigation/resolution approach from the outset where appropriate.
- d) Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach.
- e) Where possible incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved.
- f) All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way.
Relevant teachers should interview pupils in an open area. If it is necessary to have a second teacher or principal present at interview, the pupil should be accompanied by parent/guardian.
- g) When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner.

- h) If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements.
- i) Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after the interview by the teacher.
- j) In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken (by reference to the school policy). The school should give parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports provided to the pupils. This can be done in the form of a meeting or over the phone depending on the incident. A record of this should be kept in the teachers bullying file using Appendix 1.
- k) Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to her how she is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied.
- l) It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parent(s)/guardian(s)) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school.

6.4 Follow up and recording

6.4.1 In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher must, as part of her professional judgement, take the following factors into account:

- a. Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased;
- b. Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable;
- c. Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable;
- d. Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parent(s)/guardian(s) or the school Principal or Deputy Principal

6.4.2 Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved should be arranged separately with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable.

6.4.3 Where a parent(s)/guardian(s) is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent(s)/guardian(s) must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures.

6.4.4 In the event that a parent(s)/guardian(s) has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

6.5 Recording of bullying behaviour

It is imperative that all recording of bullying incidents is done in an objective and factual manner.

All confirmed instances of bullying behaviour must be recorded (Appendix 2) and reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable.

The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour are as follows:

6.6 Informal- pre-determination that bullying has occurred

- a. Special Education teachers and non-teaching staff should report any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them to the relevant teacher. All relevant teachers must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. This record is to be kept in an anti-bullying log book in the class teachers locked filing cabinet in their room. This book is to be passed on to the new class teacher at the beginning of each school year. When a class has reached the end of their primary education their log book is sent to the principal who will store it safely for the appropriate amount of time as per data protection regulations.
- b. Incidents in the yard must be recorded in the yard book by the duty teacher and also reported to the class teacher who can record their investigation in their log book. All incidents must be reported to the relevant teacher.
- c. All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher must keep a record in their log book of the reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same. It may be necessary to staple eye witness accounts into the log book as part of this investigation.
- d. If it is determined that bullying has occurred the relevant teacher must fill out a bullying behaviour record form. (Appendix 2)

- e. The relevant teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated.

6.7 Formal Stage 1-determination that bullying has occurred

- a. If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher must keep appropriate written records which will assist her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved. This should be done on Appendix 2.
- b. Kilnamona N.S. protocol for the storage of all bullying records is as follows - relevant teacher's record details of situation (appendix 2), a copy is given to the Principal. The Principal stores this copy securely in his bullying records. The details are also stored securely by the relevant teacher in their anti-bullying file in their filing cabinet and the teacher will pass it on to the incoming class teacher at the end/start of each new year.

6.8 Formal Stage 2-Appendix 3 (From DES Procedures)

The relevant teacher must use the recording template attached (Appendix 3) to record the bullying behaviour in cases where he/she considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after she has determined that bullying behaviour occurred.

As in Formal Stage 1 the recording template must be retained by the relevant teacher in question in their anti-bullying file and a copy maintained by the principal.

Teachers' records are retained in a locked filing cabinet in the teachers' classroom. All report templates given to the Principal will be retained in the filing cabinet in the Principals Office.

7. Established intervention strategies

- a. Teacher interviews with all pupils
- b. Negotiating agreements between pupils and following these up by monitoring progress. This can be on an informal basis or implemented through a more structured mediation process
- c. Working with parent/guardian to support school interventions
- d. No Blame Approach
- e. Circle Time
- f. Restorative interviews
- g. Restorative conferencing
- h. Implementing questionnaires

7.1 Kilnamona NS intervention strategies include

- a) Staff meetings to increase vigilance and monitoring
- b) Circle time
- c) Workshops/External Speakers
- d) Use of relevant curricular areas

- e) Meeting to notify parents/guardians of allegations and engage co-operation in resolving the matter.
- f) Review meetings with parents/guardians
-Where allegations have been substantiated:
- g) Sanctions consistent with code of behaviour and proportionate
- h) The traditional successful disciplinary approach (see code of behaviour)
- i) Mediation (involving professionals)
- j) Restorative Practice (involving professionals)
- k) In some instance it may be appropriate to engage the services of external agencies for example N.E.P.S, C.A.H.M.S., etc.

7.2. Support for Pupils affected by Bullying

A programme of support for pupils who have been bullied will be put in place. Such pupils may need counselling and/or opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop their friendships and social skills and thereby build resilience whenever this is needed. This support may be provided by the class teacher through our SPHE programme or in small group or one to one sessions with a support teacher.

Of equal importance is a programme of support for those pupils involved in bullying behaviour. Pupils involved in bullying behaviour need assistance on an ongoing basis. In addition, the learning strategies applied within our school allow for the enhancement of the pupil's self-worth.

Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour may need counselling to help them to learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others. We aim to ensure that parents receive contact details of trained personnel equipped to provide this service.

8. Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils

The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible.

9. Prevention of Harassment

The Board of Management confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of pupils or staff or the harassment of pupils or staff on any of the nine grounds specified i.e. gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller Community.

10. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on November 25th 2019

11. This policy has been made available to school personnel, and provided to the Parents' Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

12. This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, and provided to the Parents' Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

13. All pupils' records are kept in accordance with the GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS Act 2018

Signed: *Pat Hogan*

Date: November 25th 2019

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: *Seán Crowe*

Date: November 25th 2019

(Principal)

Appendix 1:

Kilnamona N.S. Code of Behaviour/Anti-Bullying Meeting with Parents

Teacher:

Date:

Time:

Agenda:

Child's Name and Class:

Parent in attendance:

Discussion:

Outcome:

**Appendix 3:
Template for recording bullying behaviour unresolved after 20 days
(DES Template)**

1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name _____ Class _____

2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour

—
—
—
—

3. Source of bullying concern/report

4. Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es))*

Pupil concerned		Playground	
Other pupil		Classroom	
Parent		Corridor	
Teacher		Toilets	
Other		School Bus	
		Other	

5. Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern

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6. Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es))*

Physical Aggression		Cyber-bullying	
Damage to Property		Intimidation	
Isolation/Exclusion		Malicious Gossip	
Name Calling		Other (specify)	

7. Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category:

Homophobic	Disability/SEN related	Racist	Membership of Traveller community	Other (specify)

8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

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9. Details of actions taken

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Signed _____ (relevant Teacher) Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

Appendix 4: Practical tips for building a positive school culture and climate

The following are some practical tips for immediate actions that can be taken to help build a positive school culture and climate and to help prevent and tackle bullying behaviour.

- Model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times.
- Explicitly teach pupils what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school.
- Display key respect messages in classrooms, in assembly areas and around the school. Involve pupils in the development of these messages.
- Catch them being good - notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour by providing positive attention.
- Consistently tackle the use of discriminatory and derogatory language in the school – this includes homophobic and racist language and language that is belittling of pupils with a disability or SEN.
- Give constructive feedback to pupils when respectful behaviour and respectful language are absent.
- Have a system of encouragement and rewards to promote desired behaviour and compliance with the school rules and routines.
- Explicitly teach pupils about the appropriate use of social media.
- Positively encourage pupils to comply with the school rules on mobile phone and internet use.
- Follow up and follow through with pupils who ignore the rules.
- Actively involve parents and/or the Parents' Association in awareness raising campaigns around social media.
- Actively promote the right of every member of the school community to be safe and secure in school.
- Highlight and explicitly teach school rules in pupil friendly language in the classroom and in common areas.
- All staff can actively watch out for signs of bullying behaviour.
- Ensure there is adequate playground/school yard/outdoor supervision.
- School staff can get pupils to help them to identify bullying “hot spots” and “hot times” for bullying in the school.
 - Hot spots tend to be in the playground/school yard/outdoor areas, changing rooms, corridors and other areas of unstructured supervision.
 - Hot times again tend to be times where there is less structured supervision such as when pupils are in the playground/school yard or moving classrooms.